

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A polishing apparatus comprising:

a polishing plate provided with an abrasive cloth;

a chuck for holding a polishing target material to bring the polishing target material into contact with the abrasive cloth;

a head body fixed to a rotary drive shaft, for holding and rotatably driving the chuck;

and a retainer ring ~~arranged~~ supported by the head body in a periphery of the chuck, the polishing target material being polished by the abrasive cloth by a relative motion of the polishing plate and the chuck,

characterized in that ~~the retainer ring and the chuck can be independently oscillated while a gap of a fixed range between the retainer ring and the chuck is constantly maintained~~ the polishing apparatus includes:-

supporting means for supporting the retainer ring and the chuck respectively to the head main body so that the retainer ring and the chuck can be moved in a direction of the rotary drive shaft and in a vertical direction independently from each other; and

gap securing means for maintaining a gap between the retainer ring and the chuck in a direction perpendicular to the rotary drive shaft, within a predetermined range.

2. (Currently Amended) A polishing apparatus comprising:
~~a polishing plate provided with an abrasive cloth;~~
~~a chuck for holding a polishing target material to bring the polishing target material~~
~~into contact with the abrasive cloth;~~
~~and a retainer ring arranged in a periphery of the chuck;~~
~~the polishing target material being polished by the abrasive cloth by the relative~~
~~motion of the polishing plate and the chuck;~~
~~characterized in that the retainer ring can vertically move and oscillate with respect~~
~~to the chuck while a gap of a fixed range between the retainer ring and the chuck is~~
~~constantly maintained.~~
according to claim 1, characterized in that the retainer ring is
movable in the vertical direction with respect to the chuck.

3. (Original) The polishing apparatus according to Claim 1 or 2, characterized in that one or a plurality of clearances to facilitate the oscillation are provided.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Amended) The polishing apparatus according to any of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the range of the gap is between 0.5mm and 2.0mm.

6. (Previously Amended) The polishing apparatus according to Claim 5,

characterized in that the distance between the center of the chuck and the center of the polishing target material is no more than 0.5mm.

7. (Previously Amended) The polishing apparatus according to any of Claims 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6, characterized in that the retainer ring is rotatable with respect to the chuck.

8. -9. (Withdrawn)

10. (Withdrawn) A method of wafer manufacture comprising at least a coarse polishing step and a final polishing step,

characterized in that a polishing head comprising a chuck for holding a polishing target material to bring it into contact with an abrasive cloth and a retainer ring arranged to be vertically movable in a periphery of the chuck is employed and,

the polishing in the coarse polishing step is implemented in a state in which the abrasive cloth is pushed by the retainer ring, and the polishing in the final polishing step is implemented in a state in which the retainer ring is retracted from the abrasive cloth,

to thereby implement the coarse polishing step and the final polishing step using the same polishing head.